

Country and People

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young men are very fond of adorning their hair with ostrich or other fine feathers.

The men and generally also unmarried girls go naked. In recent times many men wear a cotton cloth, which is knotted on the left shoulder, and slung round the right hip; chiefly people living near the mission have partly adopted this clothing; the desire to possess such a cotton-cloth is a stimulus for many a Shilluk to work for a few days or weeks in the mission-compound; the number of those who do so is apparently increasing. Animal-skins are generally not worn by men as an every-day dress. Women, and sometimes girls are dressed in cow, calf, or antelope skins, which are either wrapped round the body, or hung over the shoulder.

CLOTHING
AND
ORNAMENTS

[The full dress of a woman is described by Mrs. Giffen in "The Egyptian Sudan" as follows: First of all there is a small apron. This is a piece of coarse cloth — originally white — about two feet long and eighteen inches wide. It is made of two thicknesses, and it is tied by strings fastened to two corners around the waist, but just below the abdomen, and falls down to the knees.

Then there are two skins, of sheep, goat, calf, gazelle or whatever it may be, tanned with the hair on, and worn with the hair side out. One of these is tied around the waist, using one foreleg and one hindleg of the skin for strings to tie with. The tail and the other two legs — or the skin of them — dangle and flap around the legs as ornaments. Indeed these are sometimes ornamented with beads, brass or iron rings. This skin is tied in front so as to show the white apron underneath.

The other skin is worn on the upper part of the body. The fore and hind legs on one side are fastened together at their very tips; this is then slipped over the head, the legs of the skin thus tied together resting on the right shoulder, and the other side passing under the left arm. This is the full dress of a woman. Of course in addition to this they may wear as many beads and other ornaments as they can afford; strings of beads around the waist, neck, and arms, and armlets, of brass; sometimes as many as ten or twelve brass or iron rings, weighing several pounds, and extending from the hand half way to the elbow. These are not loose, but drawn tight to the flesh, and each made fast by the blacksmith. Similar rings of iron are often worn by the elder women on the ankle. These are very heavy and produce great knots in the flesh.

The little girls wear the apron only, and when a little older, put on the shoulder skin, and when full grown wear the skin about the waist.]

When meeting for a dance both sexes are richly dressed. While present at

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stones are collected by the Arabs of Kordofan about the numerous mountains there. The amount of labour required to work them into the proper shape accounts for their high value, as well as their scarcity among the Shilluks.

A Shilluk man hardly leaves his home without carrying a spear or two, and a club. They have two kinds of spears, one whose blade has the form of a laurel-leaf, another with a cylindric blade, ending in a sharp point, the surface being either smooth or barbed. The shafts are of common wood without any ornaments. The spears often have a tuft of short ostrich feathers or of wool, near the butt. The cylindrical (round) spears are used not only as arms, but also in fishing. Besides the spears, they have two species of clubs, at least one of which a man always carries with him. One is simply a thick stick without any meter long, and heavy at one end. The other is about two feet and a half long, made in one solid piece of hard, heavy wood, with a big round knob at one end.

The Shilluks are a haughty, proud people. They are much inclined to consider themselves and everything belonging to them as superior to the strangers, including the white men. "The things of the Shilluks are good, and the things of the strangers are bad", is a common saying among them. They do not in any way want the foreigners and their mode of life. This strong disinclination is not only due to their innate character, but also to the evil experiences they have had with Arabs, Turks, Abyssinians, the Dervishes etc.

The well-founded feeling of suspicion and even of contempt for white people will grow less intensive or may disappear altogether in consequence of the peaceful intercourse they now have with the representatives of the white race. In conversing with a white man they at the best treat him as their equal, but hardly ever as their superior. It requires therefore considerable tact to deal with them. Once having gained confidence they are frank, open-minded, and always ready for a joke, but they are also quickly offended.

As warriors the Shilluks are brave; they make excellent soldiers in colonial troops, and are renowned as the best soldiers in the Sudan; generally they become really attached to their leaders, whether white or black.

Working for the white man is done only in times of dearth, when no food is obtainable in other ways. But in spite of this difficulty the mission has, during the last few years, had remarkable results in educating the natives to regular voluntary work. — If one sees a Shilluk standing for an hour or longer almost without ever moving, except now and then scratching his head or chewing his tooth-stick, or if one meets them lying in the shade of the village place for hours together, one might believe them to be an extremely lazy people. But this would be only partly right. Indeed during the dry season they have not much work

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to do, except hunting, fishing, building or repairing the houses, or practising some craft: their chief occupation in this time is idling about, seeing friends, dancing, etc. But in the rainy season all people, including women and children, are engaged in farm-work; during these months they are really hard-working.

To give an opinion on the mental abilities of the natives would require a long and intimate acquaintance with them. From my personal experiences I can only say that I feel an admiration for the few men who have been working with me during my studies. They were never tired in giving explanations, in procuring folklore and helping me to acquire a thorough knowledge of the language. Whenever their store of tales was exhausted, they used to go to their families in the evening to get new informations; historical reports being provided by old men, chiefly from those belonging to the royal family, while for stories, riddles, etc. women were the best source. Though we were at work day after day, which meant for them a considerable and quite unaccustomed mental exertion, they never showed any unwillingness, but were really interested in the work. I consider them an intelligent, quick-witted people. This is confirmed by their folklore. They have a decided sense and predilection for historical traditions, being the only black people of the Eastern Sudan who are able to trace back their own history for centuries. The fact that they have had, up to the European occupation of the country, a kingdom with a well-ordered provincial government, shows no doubt certain political capabilities.

II. OCCUPATIONS.

361 HOUSEBUILDING

Vide page 96 and 97.

The homestead is surrounded by a fence of dura-stalks. The villages are built in a circle, the open space in the centre containing sometimes a meeting-house for the men, and a small, narrow hut which is dedicated to Nyikang or some other ancient king.

AGRICULTURE CATTLE BREEDING

Vide page 99.

The favourite occupation of the Shilluks is cattle-breeding; cattle mean wealth and a social position, while the cultivation of the ground is merely the means of procuring daily food. Besides cattle goats and sheep are kept. The number of cattle has in earlier times undoubtedly been much larger than it is to-day, the desire of robbing cattle being one of the chief reasons for the raids of Arabs, Turks, and other enemies. The cattle census of 1903 showed 12 173 head of cattle and 63 473 sheep and goats, which is very little compared with that of the Dinkas. But the number of cattle is increasing now.

The cattle are of the zebu race, with a hump behind the neck; they are tall,

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Occupations

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A list of craftsmen and their trade vide page 105. A few words may be added here on some particular crafts. They have skilful blacksmiths; these make spears, hoes, axes, harpoons, picks, arm-rings of brass and of iron, bells, chains. Their handicraft, which is carried on chiefly during the dry season, is a travelling one; they take their tools and go about from one place to another. While among the Dinkas the blacksmiths are considered a low, despised class of people, who live separate from the villages in the bush, with the Shilluks they are respected persons, and accordingly their pay is good. The employer has to support the blacksmith working for him, and pays him a sheep beside. Iron is not found in the Shilluk country. Previous to the opening up of the country to the traders the iron secured by the Shilluks came from the Dinkas and Nuera, who seemed to buy it from the natives of the Upper Nile regions (Jura, Bongos), where iron is smelted; some may also have come from Darfur through Kordofan. In recent years, however, nearly all of it is procured from the north, and is of European origin. A remarkable proof of the growing willingness on the side of the natives to work for wages is the fact that during the last two years the American missionaries have introduced and sold to the natives some thirteen tons of raw iron, together with a great number of good iron tools, as axes, etc. Not only the raw material, but even the finished articles of native manufacture are gradually being replaced by European imports. Their good spears are still made by their own blacksmiths, but many cheap spears are bought from the traders; so are their crude axes, mattocks and hoes. Iron bracelets and other ornaments are made by their blacksmiths from iron rods. If the rod is too large, it is heated and beaten out. Whatever the Shilluk blacksmith makes, is superior to the imported article that he gets from the Arab or Greek trader. It may be mentioned that the word *bēgē*, which means originally and properly "blacksmith", has also the wider sense of "craftsman", and has become a designation for all other crafts they practise.

An important craft is that of the thatch-maker. The roofs of the Shilluk houses are of a peculiarly neat description. While the Dinkas generally leave the roof with the appearance of being unfinished, the grass not being smoothed down and cut at the ends, the Shilluk thatcher makes his thatch with a neatness which really excites admiration. The framework of the roof is always made on the ground and placed on the circular wall like a great conical cap.

Plaiting is practised by both sexes. Men make the large, coarse mats for enclosing yards, and also the large grain baskets. Women plait small fancy mats for covering food, and also very nice small coloured baskets, sieves, etc.

Most of the men make their own ostrich shell girdles. The shells are first broken into irregular pieces, which are pierced in the center with an awl-

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OTHER CRAFTS

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Shilluk Life

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Immediately every dog in the district is awake and alert and the peace of the night is shattered by a cacophony of furious barking. In the mission we thump our wet pillows and call down blessings on the dogs and the hyena. Eventually quiet is restored as the hyena's howls die away in the distance. The village sleeps. 5/2

Such then, in brief, is a description of Shilluk village life, yet our understanding of these people would be very incomplete without a more detailed picture of their activities, their work and their play. To them, as to most of the inhabitants of the continent of Africa, the common saying, 'to work like a black', is scarcely applicable, for the Shilluk is no fonder of work than the next man, and he is not one of those restless individuals who are never happy unless busy with hand and brain making and mending and improving. Yet there are times when he must bestir himself, for he is essentially self-supporting. From soil and river he must provide himself with what he requires for food and shelter, and beyond this bare minimum of subsistence he must strive to get something more which he can sell or exchange for a cloth for himself and his wife, for a handful of salt and a drop of oil. If his labours yield no such margin, he may have to offer his services to the mission or the trader to earn the money to procure what he cannot provide himself. The Shilluk is, and indeed has to be, a man of all trades. To get the grain for his food he must farm the land, and although his methods of husbandry may be primitive, he is expert in the traditional way of farming. In fishing he is skilled in the use of the net, harpoon, spear and fish trap, and gets the best results possible from these methods. His house is neat and strongly built, and, according to one missionary of wide experience, is among the best thatched of all African houses. To cross the Nile on his fishing expeditions he must have a boat of some kind, and from a light, cork-like wood called ambach which grows plentifully in the Detwok area he constructs a beautiful, unsinkable canoe, light enough to be carried by one man, yet able to carry three people in perfect safety. To roof his house and make fences around it he uses the

224 tormentors and overturn and smash the canoe, killing or maiming its occupants. In Tonga I once saw a youth whose shoulder had almost been torn away by a hippopotamus. With some companions he had been hunting in the Bahr-el-Gazal when the hippo they were attacking charged the canoe and flung its occupants into the water. He had the misfortune to fall near the enraged animal which seized his shoulder with its powerful teeth and tore the flesh. He had been taken first to the mission of Yoynyang where the priest dressed his wound as best he could, and then brought on to Tonga. When I saw him he was sitting quite impassively, enduring the pain with stoicism as the Sister dressed his torn shoulder while waiting for a boat to take him to the hospital in Malakal.

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787 One peculiar feature of a hippo hunt is that the hunters, before beginning their operations, sacrifice a hen by drowning it in the river. They then bury it in the reeds at the river's edge and one (sometimes two) of them, shaking convulsively, goes into a kind of ecstatic frenzy during which he foretells the number of beasts that will be killed; one may plump for three, two large ones and a small, the other for five, three big and two small. It is remarkable that a single 'shaker's' forecast is often completely accurate, though whether this is due to his making a lucky guess, or being prompted by his guardian angel, I would hesitate to say. It is significant, however, that in later life many of these amateur prophets become witch doctors.

- 461 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy' is a saying as true of the Shilluk as of any other race of mankind, and after all his sowing and reaping, building and thatching, fishing and hunting, his 'capacity for innocent enjoyment is just as great as any honest man's'. A European travelling through Shilluk country on a hot, windless afternoon and seeing a cloud of dust rising into the air at some distance before him might wonder what freak of nature was causing a dust storm in that particular spot, when all around was so still and breathless. Approaching nearer to the phenomenon,

Shilluk Life

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the roar of voices and the clashing of weapons might well make him apprehensive that he would soon find himself on the scene of a bloody battle between two rival villages. However, the reality would prove such fears unfounded, for he would merely discover that the dance was on, and that Shilluk youth was taking an afternoon off to enjoy itself. The Shilluk is fonder of dancing, we may suppose, than of anything else in the world. He will walk, or rather run and leap and jump, for miles to a place where dancing is to take place; and as he goes along he will lift his unmusical voice in raucous song, or give vent to blood-curdling whoops, springing high into the air and lunging with his spear at imaginary foes. Then for the next two or three hours he will bruise his great flat feet by pounding them on the ground, and yell himself hoarse, yet return home at the end of it not a bit less exuberant than when he set off. It may be the rainy season when the food stores are at their lowest level, and he will return home to a damp, fireless hut and an empty food bowl, but he does not mind; if he cannot eat and drink, at least he can make merry, and the dance will continue tomorrow and the day after too.

The day of his first dance marks a high light in the life of a Shilluk boy. Up to this he has been a wistful onlooker, a mere boy among other boys, whose occupation has been the minding of sheep and goats, the cleaning out of the cattle byre, the fetching and carrying for his betters; now, however, he has become as good as they are. He may dye his cloth as red and do up his hair as elaborately as they; carry real spears, not just some blunted cast-off a good-natured elder brother has given him; sit in council among his equals; take up his good new spear, if necessary, in defence of his village or his tribe.

On the day of the dance therefore, he attires himself with great care; his body shines with oil and is liberally powdered with red ochre; his hair is dressed in the way beloved of Shilluk youth; since 'tails' are *de rigueur* for these functions, he wears them: an antelope skin bound round his waist by a coloured sash with two strips of skin from the legs hanging

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unsatisfying a task as to build on sand. With no solid and permanent base on which to rest, a building after two or three rainy seasons begins to move and sink, and so the missionary ruefully surveys the ominous cracks that have already appeared in the walls of school buildings that only two years ago were his pride and joy. Windows and doors have warped and white ants have already wrought havoc in the woodwork. All the mud buildings need to be replastered without and limewashed within and the thatched roofs of many of them must be renewed. The Sisters' convent is in a bad way, although they, good souls, never complain; however, if something is not done about the back wall this year, it may be that they will be past complaining. And the church, too; but that is really beyond repair. It should be pulled down and rebuilt, but when and how, and who is expert enough to do it, and what he is going to use for money to pay for it, the missionary has not the slightest idea. In the meantime he hopes devoutly that the pictures on the walls will continue to hold the cracks together for another year or two. 797*
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The immediate task, however, is brickmaking. He must try to get a hundred thousand bricks made this year so that he will be able to satisfy his present requirements and leave a margin for further operations next year. Well, one thing about the Upper Nile is that it provides him with plenty of material for making bricks, namely, mud. Still, the stuff has to be dug and puddled and moulded into the right shape and size and then built into a kiln and fired. So the word goes forth among the Shilluk that there is a job of work to be done up at the mission and that applications for appointments as soil diggers, water carriers, sand carriers, mud puddlers and brickmakers and, later on, as kiln builders, furnace tenders, brick carriers, pole fetchers, roof makers, grass carriers and thatchers, will be given every consideration. The invitations, I say, go out, but the Shilluk as a rule is in no hurry to come in. And if his crop of grain has been good, he probably won't respond at all. What does that crazy white man up at the mission think that he, the Shilluk, is? 797*
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Mission on the Nile

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Hasn't he been working for the past four months or so planting and weeding and reaping? Hasn't he got enough food now, that eked out with a little not too strenuous fishing will last him for six months or so, that is, if he can get his kids into the school again, and thus be relieved of the necessity of feeding them? And that reminds him, he must get that eldest son of his out of the school. The crop is gathered in now, so the goats can be let out to graze and the lad can mind them; it is time that he did something useful after the nice long holiday he has had up at the foreigner's place during the rains. Now it is his turn to have a holiday, and, by Nyikang, he's going to have one too; he's going to sit around and do nothing but drink beer until the rains come round again. Of course, there is that little matter of his tax that the other unpleasant foreigner from Kodok will be demanding soon. Of the two, he prefers the fellow at the mission; he sometimes gives him tobacco, but the only thing the one in Kodok has ever given him is three months in prison. Well, the tax is easily disposed of. His wife can sell some of the grain, or go out into the forest and collect enough firewood to sell to the Sisters in order to pay the tax. Thus pleasantly musing, he roars to a boy to fetch him his pipe, and to his wife to bring some more beer, and he sinks back against the fence of his house and relaxes gratefully in the warm sunshine.

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If such is the general attitude of the Shilluk in the district, the would-be brickmaker and builder finds that his ambitious schemes have to be drastically modified. It is little use his going out, like the king's servants in the parable, into the highways and the byways to compel them to come in. Experience has taught him that if the Shilluk don't want to work they won't, and no amount of persuading will make them. He manages to raise a couple of teams of brickmakers, a moulder and two labourers to each team, and a few thriftless youths who have no money to pay their tax or other means of raising it drift in and are set to work to supply the brickmakers with sand and water. But he is in a sorry plight; he won't get anything like the number of

* 797 awful thought! But can't it be arranged that they will get just a sufficiency, and having no margin for taxes and other such luxuries will have to come to the mission and make his bricks and put up his buildings to get the money they need?'

● 461 And often enough, that is just what does happen. The
* 797 rains have failed, or have been too plentiful, or fallen too early or too late, and the Shilluk gloomily surveys his ruined crop and looks sadly at the meagre harvest he has gathered.

[65] That certainly won't see him very far through the year, and there is none that he can spare to sell for tax money, and if he doesn't pay that soon, the chief will come down heavily on him and will impound some of his sheep and goats, or— and he reels with horror at the bare thought—one of his

[59] cows. His wife keeps nagging him for a new cloth and, as he knows from past experience, will keep on nagging until she gets it; an ordinary white one is not good enough for her now; she wants one of those fancy ones with flowers on, like the teacher's wife is wearing. These women are getting

[29] above themselves. The wild idea of selling a cow crosses his mind, but is immediately dismissed as absurd; he would sooner sell his wife, but anyway, the one idea is as fantastic as the other. Having thus surveyed the whole black situation he comes to the conclusion that has been facing him all the time, but which he has tried to evade as being too awful; he will have to go to work. And so, with a sigh, he bids farewell to his beautiful dream of living in luxuriant idleness for the next few months, and reluctantly makes his way towards the mission. The missionary, although, mind you, he is distressed that the harvest has been a failure, and appalled at the idea of his people being in want, positively purrs with satisfaction when early on Monday morning he sees the crowd that are waiting for employment. He singles out half a dozen good

* 797 brickmakers, assigns them their labourers and sends them
339 off to the brickfield for the task of clearing up and pre-
* 797 paring the mud, as a preliminary to starting the moulding on the morrow. Six go scurrying with water carts to fetch water from the swamps, two to their disgust are armed with shovels and set to work in the sand pit, there to keep the line

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of sand carriers fully employed; half a dozen more, to their greater disgust, are given picks and sent to dig out the foundations of the new buildings, and of the remainder some are led to the site for the new huts and put to work to clean up the ground so that the foundations can be marked out, and others given the job of making and puddling mud for the replastering of the present mud buildings. 339 797*

Now commences a period of unceasing activity on the part of the missionary. There are some seventy workmen employed in four different parts of the mission estate, and, except for the brickmakers who are paid a set price for every thousand bricks, each and every one of them is only too ready to steal away and fold his hands and close his eyes in repose as soon as the boss's back is turned. He, poor harassed man, has become the complete Pooh-Bah of the building industry; he must act as architect, general contractor, storekeeper, clerk of works, foreman, timekeeper and cashier, and at the same time keep the mission running normally. He does not forget his priestly duties, and so he is up long before the dawn to say his Mass and have as much as possible of his Office said before he goes out at 6 a.m. to call the roll and start the men on their day's work. He returns to the house to bolt his breakfast, but before he has finished, there are half a dozen outside clamouring for attention. A wheel has come off a water cart, and the crew, never dreaming of putting it back themselves and finding a nail to hold it in place, but only too happy to have a legitimate excuse to sit down and do nothing, are doing just that. He slaps it back into place on the axle, secures it with a bolt and nut and scares the watermen into actually galloping off towards the river. A brickmaker has broken his mould and that requires a little carpentry and a few new screws. A digger complains that he can't find his shovel, is led firmly to the tool shed and falls over the missing article as he enters the doorway. A crowd of people has gathered at the back of the house and the number is increasing as more people come from the villages carrying poles or hanks of grass rope for sale. Each pole and hank has to be inspected, its value appraised and paid for on the spot. 797* 466 461 339 465 437

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paid for on the spot. But the Reverend Pooh-Bah leaves them for the time being and goes off on the first tour of inspection. He meets the sand carriers on their way from the sand pit to the brickfield, and his suspicions are aroused by the easy and jaunty manner in which they are carrying the baskets which should be at least half full of sand. Examination of the first basket reveals just a couple of inches of sand in the bottom. The rest of the girls—for the sand carriers are ladies

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—don't wait to be inspected, but shrieking with laughter scamper off back to the sand pit where he follows them and ensures that they carry one legitimate load at least. Then having threatened the bearers with all kinds of penalties if they don't bring a proper load each time, he goes off to inspect the bricks. The moulders and their assistants are

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really putting their backs into it, for the more bricks they make, the more money they will earn, and already there are long double lines of newly made bricks stretching out in front of each man. In one case it is a matter of more haste, less speed, for yesterday's output belonging to one man has gaped and split in the hot sun, a sign that the mud has been badly mixed and the puddling has been scamped. These useless ones are rejected and the number deducted from the culprit's total. The missionary leaves the erring team

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vehemently arguing the matter among themselves, since a man from the hut-plastering squad comes along to tell him that they are held up for lack of water, and that the water carriers have been gone long enough to have made several journeys. He goes back to the house to get his bicycle, and ignoring the clamour that the pole and rope carriers set up at his appearance, speeds down to the river. The cart is there all right, half-way down the path, but there is no sign of the men who are supposed to be filling the drum. He spots one of them, almost hidden in the tall grass, engaged in washing himself, and a splashing a little further down reveals the presence of the other two happily employed in casting for mud fish. In a remarkably short space of time, however, they have the drum filled and are hastening back to the waiting plasterers, the irate Father grimly bringing up the rear.

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one end of the compound bring Pooh-Bah hurrying from the other to add those of peacemaker and judge to his other rôles. Workmen tire of their particular jobs (water carrying is particularly hated) and demand another one. The water carrying difficulty is not solved until a roster is formed so that everyone except the lordly brickmakers and bricklayers take their turn. Hoes begin to disappear, but that little pastime is effectively put an end to by stopping the price out of the wages of every individual in the squad concerned. After the second one disappears it is found to be too expensive.

Now it is time to fire the kiln. The six tunnels are roughly bricked up on one side and filled with firewood and straw from the other. The fires are lighted at dusk, and once they are kindled must not be allowed to go out until the firing is completed. Soon each fire is blazing merrily, and the draught forcing the fire back through the mass of dry wood and straw quickly turns each tunnel into a roaring cavern of flame. The kiln presents a grand spectacle in the darkness, as great tongues of fire lick out from the openings and billows of smoke from the wood and clouds of steam from the still drying bricks envelop the whole structure. The firing continues on one side for two nights and two days; then that side is bricked up and the other side opened and the process for firing continued for a like period. The interiors of the tunnels are before long glowing white-hot masses of fused brick, and the kiln soon becomes fiercely hot as the flames mount up, searching through each crack and cranny to reach the top of the mass. When the firing is completed, the tunnels are blocked up again, any cracks that have appeared in the walls are plastered over anew and the mass is left to cool down, a process that takes about a week. By now there are sufficient bricks to commence the second kiln and this is built in the same manner as the first. But the priest has noted with concern that the firing of the kiln has consumed far more wood than he had anticipated. The strong north wind which now blows with full force every day has helped on the fires more enthusiastically than he would have liked. He cannot go to the expense of getting more wood from Kodok, and the

731 widespread, few have a sufficiency and fewer have any to spare for sale. Then the plight of the Shilluk is pitiful indeed.

Such a disaster occurred in 1945. The rains were sparse all over the country and failed almost entirely in the Upper Nile Province. In the Detwok area, after a promising start a prolonged drought set in and the young shoots withered and died. Hope revived when a heavy downpour of rain broke the drought and the people went out to plant again. But this second planting suffered the same fate as the first and as one scorching day followed another during the remainder of what was supposed to be the rainy season expectation slowly died, together with the wilting crops. The ruin was complete and, as we soon learned, was confined not merely to our own area or even to the Upper Nile but was general throughout the country.

797 In Detwok we were planning to open a Central School the
731 following year and consequently had in hand a larger
461 building programme than usual. The famine assured us of no scarcity of labour. Usually even though the crops are meagre there is no shortage in the months immediately following the harvest, and the Shilluk, careless for the future, gives himself over to the enjoyment of the fruits of his industry. Much of his precious grain is converted into beer

[574] and he dispenses and receives lavish hospitality at the many
[585] village dances with which the Shilluk celebrates the harvest. Not unnaturally the proposal that he should spend the next few months digging foundations or brickmaking or carrying water is received with a marked lack of enthusiasm, and we usually depend for our labour upon those improvident bachelors who have not bothered about a cultivation and who moreover are faced with the necessity of raising money to pay the annual poll tax.

731 This year, however, there was no need to be anxious about
797 a shortage of workmen. Each Monday when the labourers
466 were hired for the week the mission was besieged from before dawn by hundreds of men and women begging for a chance to be able to earn a few shillings. We were able to employ only a fraction of this crowd, and it was a thankless and an